

43rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT • ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR

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## Jorgensen's Journal: Attacks On Local Control Lack Common Sense

Nobody likes to be told how to do their job or told when they can or cannot do their job. Nevertheless, it still happens, and government is no exception.

Another legislative year has brought with it more attempts to take local control away from Wisconsin communities. Attacking local control often prohibits cities, villages, towns, and counties from taking action, which makes their offices less effective. This legislative session has resulted in limiting local regulation of actions involving real property and prohibiting almost any local action regarding structures in shoreland setback areas, just to name a couple.

While some of the bills attempting to limit local control have failed to pass, many other destructive bills have been passed with little to no regard for the communities affected by them.

Over the years, these attempts to diminish the decision-making authority of local offices have taken their toll. Everything from real estate to appointing poll workers has been affected by these attacks. Some bills have banned local governments from passing certain ordinances within their own communities, while others restrict local offices from enforcing their own rules. The choice of whether or not to construct new cell phone towers or convert bird reserves into sport shooting ranges have been taken out of the hands of the local people who are affected most by these decisions.

School boards, alderpersons, mayors, and other locally elected offices all across Wisconsin have been attacked by the majority by taking away the authority and voices of local people. Often legislation such as this is passed without a single accenting vote from across the aisle. The number of legislative attacks on local control has been steadily rising since 2011, and there seems to be no end in sight.

I personally feel that it is common sense for the people who are closest to these communities to have a say in how the community is run. Who knows the day-to-day operations better than those who experience them each and every day? They are the most knowledgeable about the inner workings of their community and have its best interest and well-being at heart. These individuals are by far the best suited to making important decisions about the operation and improvement of their own communities.

Many issues do not have a "one size fits all" solution. Learning from one another and working together to solve problems will allow us to find solutions that fit each community and their citizens. Legislators in Madison should be working alongside these local offices, not against them.